

Date: 3/15/01

Re: Dockets 00D-1598 and 00N-1396

5856 01 MAR 21 P5:32

Dear FDA Commissioner,

The proposed Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations fail to require labels or safety tests on genetically engineered (GE) food. The new rules continue to deny Americans the right to know what is in our food, while protecting the economic interests of biotech corporations.

Labeling GE foods would protect the public from potential hazardous health effects such as food allergies and toxicity that can only be traced if GE foods can be identified. By refusing to require both labeling and mandatory pre-market safety testing of foods, the FDA puts consumer's health at risk, ignores possible environmental hazards, and fails to satisfy the overwhelming desire of American consumers to exercise freedom of choice in the marketplace.

It is not enough to require that firms simply notify you of their intent to market a food produced with genetic engineering; this is no substitute for thorough pre-market safety testing. The proposed "voluntary labeling" guidelines will do nothing to inform consumers of the presence of genetically engineered ingredients in their food, because biotech companies and food manufacturers have vehemently opposed labeling in the past and will not voluntarily label their foods in the future.

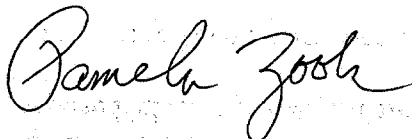
Therefore, I urge you to keep all genetically engineered ingredients and crops off the market unless or until:

- 1) Independent safety testing demonstrates they have no harmful effects on human health or the environment;
- 2) They are labeled to ensure consumers' right-to-know; and
- 3) The biotechnology corporations that produce them are held responsible for any harms they may cause.

I hope that you will consider these issues very carefully.

Thank you very much.

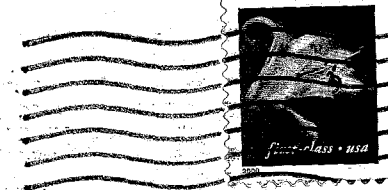
Sincerely,



00D-1598

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